

worship are stumblings upon an unfamiliar road. In England we call them 'the preliminaries.' Anybody can take the preliminaries. The people are irritable until the sermon begins. We are trying to lead people near to God who are nearer to God than those who lead them. Every day I feel that I need spirituality and the passion of devotion. If we have lost our close relationship with God the problem is how can we recover it, recover our intimacy with God? The first thing we have to do is this—I have got to hold fast firmly and steadily to the principle that of all things that need doing by me this thing is supreme, to keep near God.

"We cannot allow ourselves to drift. We cannot leave the matter to chance or accident. I have got to affirm to my soul, 'Now, my soul, thou hast this, that, and the other to do today. Thou hast that work to do. But, my soul, thy supreme work is to live near to God.'"

"In presence of the details of work you lose the sense of the value of things. Use ten minutes every morning to write down the program of the day. Then take the size of those things. Use the quiet moments to take an estimate. Set everything in its place and hold God supreme.

"I say, 'My soul, everything on that program will be futile and ineffective unless thou shalt live near God.' Second, when you have nerved yourself by that resolution and that affirmative, then seriously discipline your soul. Of all people whose soul-culture becomes a matter of chance ours has the greatest peril. Have a fixed season of communion with God. The early morning is the time for me: 'My voice shalt thou hear in the morning.' Alexander Whyte says he has to wait until everybody has gone to bed. Have a time and stick to it. Put the newspaper aside, and go into thy closet and pray. Use every help to make your devotion real. Dr. Horton says that in his private devotions he never uses a book, not even a Bible, that smells of the workshop. Since Dr. Horton gave me the suggestion I have found it very useful.

"Practice the tremendous art of praying without ceasing. My organist one day played a very beautiful air which remained with me as a permanent background for days afterward. I wonder if we could have God like that? I wonder if we could have God interpenetrating our lives? If we had that sense of God the world would call in vain, the bubbles and baubles would lure us in vain, and the stupefactions of the priestly office would not affect us. Our lives would be fragrant with God. We should be luminous with power and cleansing. Our speech would be impressive, and our prayers would be laden with grace.

"Let us stagger our people. The Lord help me that when my people see me in the pulpit again they may be staggered with the presence of God."

"Sir, I hope to carry my repentance to the very gates of heaven. Every day I find I am a sinner; and every day I need to repent. I mean to carry my repentance, by God's help, up to the very gates of heaven."—Philip Henry.

Quiet Hour

PRAYER.

Our Father in Heaven, we lift up our hearts in gratitude to Thee for all the manifold mercies where-with Thou hast enriched and gladdened our lives. Surely we may say that the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places and ours is a goodly heritage. Thou hast blessed us in basket and in store, Thou hast given us strength to do, and skill to devise, Thou hast blessed the efforts of man so that the land is filled with bounty and there is prosperity on every hand. Let not the very abundance of Thy gifts prove a snare to us to blind us to Thee and to the deeper and holier things of life. May Thy great love, manifested to us on every hand, awaken in us a deeper love and lead us to a fuller and more unreserved surrender of ourselves to Him who is the highest expression of Thine unspeakable love to us. Amen.

ON GROWING OLD.

To grow old is sad indeed, if what you want is to hold back the receding years, to keep your hair from growing white, your eyes from becoming dim, and the wrinkles from chiseling their way across your brow. But if from all these vicissitudes to which life subjects you, you draw a bit of wisdom, or profit, of goodness, to grow old is to become free and large. One of the most beautiful things in the world is an old person who, made better by experience, more indulgent, more charitable, loves mankind in spite of its wretchedness and adores youth without the slightest tendency to mimic it. Such a person is like an old Stradivarius whose tone has become so sweet that its value is increased a hundred fold, and it seems, most to have a soul.—Charles Wagner.

Take life like a man. Take it as though it was—as it is—an earnest, vital, essential affair. Take it just as though you were born to the task of performing a merry part in it—as though the world had waited your coming. Take it as though it were a grand opportunity to achieve, to carry forward great and good schemes, to hold and to cheer a suffering, weary, it may be heart-broken, brother.—Charles H. Spurgeon.

The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties. Help us to play the man, help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces, let cheerfulness abound with industry. Give us to go blithely on our business all this day, bring us to our resting beds weary and content and undishonored, and grant us in the end the gift of sleep.—Robert Louis Stevenson.

When you are asked where and how is little achievement going into God's plans, point to your Master, who keeps the plans and then go on doing your little services as faithfully as if the whole temple were yours to build.—Phillip Brooks.

Without faith it is impossible to please man.—Bert